DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 211 489 SP 019 261

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TITLE A Multicultural Early Field Experience Model: The ISU Urban Education Program.
PUB DATE [79]
NOTE 17p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Admission Criteria; *Field Experience Programs; Group Unity; Helping Relationship; Higher Education; Multicultural Education; *Preservice Teacher Education; *School Community Relationship; Student Attitudes; *Urban Education
IDENTIFIERS Illinois State University

ABSTRACT

A major component of the Illinois State University (ISU) teacher education program is early field experience in a multicultural setting. The aim of this component is to enable prospective teachers to be aware of the needs of the changing school population and its cultural diversity. The ISU community-based field experience program is coordinated with on-campus course work that is designed to prepare the students for urban experience. Students are carefully screened before entering the program. Orientation for the program is conducted by the college faculty in cooperation with local community personnel, and efforts are made to allow students to develop cohesiveness as a group in cooperative and supportive patterns. Field assignments are community-based and emphasize contact with multicultural urban populations in school and nonschool settings. The bulk of the field experiences take place in nonschool settings. Students work with professional staff in such programs as drug and mental health facilities and youth centers. This enables the prospective teachers to gain insight into the background and life realities of the urban students they will teach. In evaluating A description of a typical schedule of students in the program shows that they work in varied locations from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. In order to evaluate the program, students were given the Cultural Attitude Inventory test and the Personality Orientation Inventory test both before and after the field experience. In both tests, the mean scores of the students changed favorably from one testing period to the next, indicating development of a more positive attitude toward youth of different cultures. (JD)

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A MULTICULTURAL EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCE MODEL: THE ISU URBAN EDUCATION PROGRAM

by

Samuel J. Mungo

Based on the need for a more comprehensive approach to preparing teachers for culturally diverse settings, Illinois State University added to its overall teacher education program, a major component of multicultural early field experiences. This component, under continuous development since 1971, is today, one example of a model for use at the preservice level.[1]

Purpose and Strategies

The purpose of the ISU Urban Education Program is to provide some strategies and approaches, within the context of a multicultural early field experience component, that will enable prospective teachers to be more aware of, and more realistically attuned to, the needs of the changing school population and its cultural diversity. In addition, prospective teachers, through contact with settings culturally different from their own, begin the development of cross cultural communication and understanding.

The strategy adopted was to develop a structured, community

[1]Samuel Mungo, "ISU Urban Education Program: Current Status and Program Evaluation, 1971-1979," unpublished report, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Illinois State University, 1979.

based field experience program coordinated with on-campus course work, within which community resources, in addition to school resources, could play a major role in the training components.

Overall Goals of the Program

1. Participants will develop a greater understanding of urban life and its cultural diversity, including problems and possible solutions, services available to the urban adolescent populations, and the relationship between these problems and services and education in a multicultural urban setting.

2. Participants' attitudes toward individuals of a differing culture and environment, particularly the youth, will become more positive. They will develop an understanding of the role of cross-cultural communication in working with such populations.

3. Participants will increase their ability to work in a positive manner with urban youth in school and non-school settings.

4. Participants will be able to assess their own strengths and weaknesses relative to working with youth in culturally diverse settings, and develop guidelines for future development.

Program Components

The ISU Urban Education Program is made up of various interrelated components, each developed and revised periodically.

1. On-Campus Course Work - Field experiences by themselves cannot meet the needs of teacher trainees preparing for culturally diverse urban populations. A coordinated on-campus preparation

prior to moving into the field is essential. Thus, on-campus preparation takes two forms.

A. Preparation in the student's particular field.

B. Preparation for the urban experience. This takes the form of two prerequisite courses: Education in the Inner City, and Introduction to Multicultural Education. Both courses incorporate mini-experiences in local community agencies and schools.

2. Student Selection. In addition to completing the prerequisite coursework, students submit an application form, which indicates their background, skills and prior coursework, schedule an individual conference with program director, during which student needs and desires are discussed, as well as opportunities available in the program, and finally, students turn in an autobiography, to be used by the Director, and shared with Agency personnel on site. Using data compiled by the above, the Director will be able to determine the best schedule for each student, combining activities the student wishes to explore, activities the student has the skills to be an asset for, and activities needed to provide experiences the student lacks. Students from educational as well as non-educational fields enroll.

3. Orientation Process - Most of the students who enroll have never been in a culturally diverse, urban setting for any indepth contact. Therefore, a certain amount of "culture shock," fear and apprehension is bound to occur. The first full week of the nine week program, therefore, is devoted

solely to an orientation to the urban milieu, the program, and the various cooperating agencies and their staffs. This orientation is presented cooperatively by ISU staff and local community personnel. Concurrently with this exposure to the urban setting, efforts are made to allow students to begin developing cohesiveness as a group, and cooperative and supportive patterns that will be more strongly reinforced throughout the program. It is during this period that many cross-cultural training approaches are introduced.

4. Development of "Community" among Participants - Being placed in a strange environment, in challenging assignemnts, often makes students very apprehensive and fearful. Therefore, throughout the program, an effort is made to develop a "community" among the participants. What this does, in effect, is address the mental health aspect of teacher training. Many students are still in the process of establishing goals, and many are working on improving their self-confidence and self perception. If we are teaching students in public schools with low self images, feelings of inadequacy, apprehension, etc., we attempt to help them work toward dealing with them and increasing their self image, etc. The same is true of our teacher trainees. If we expect them to work with youth with some of these problems, they must be aware of their own strengths and weaknesses in these areas and be given support and encouragement--particularly by their peers, in dealing with them. Thus a great amount of

time is spent with the student's individual growth and his relationship with others in the group.

Initially, components were developed to bring students together because many were strangers upon entering the program, and others had taken the prerequisites together. However, the community building component of the program has become one of the most important aspects. The development of a "group" concept among the trainees, the fostering of cooperation with each other, sharing with each other, and working through of situations or relationships within the group that become difficult, has all helped the development of support among the participants. Techniques such as work projects, sharing circles, singing, daily longs, feedback notes on each other and group appraisals, ahve enabled students to feel secure with each other and themselves, and thus perform more effectively in their assignments.

5. Field Experiences - These experiences are the heart of the program. They are specific assignments in specific programs either on a part time or full time basis.

The concept of field experiences used in this program is that they should be varied, structured, and developed so that students will get an increasingly more complex involvement as time progresses, and they are related to student's needs, skills, and to settings that are culturally diverse from student's background. The range of programs to be selected and the choices within that range are determined by ISU staff. Students lack the familiarity with the community, and knowledge of the specific programs, to be

allowed to simply go out and "find a place to work." A very structured, controlled, and supervised, culturally diverse approach is used throughout. Field assignments are community based, emphasising contact with multicultural, urban populations in school and non-school settings. It is not possible for a teacher trainee to understand the alienation, insecurity, and behaviors that are culturally determined, if their only contact is in the classroom. This is where youth too often experience failure, therefore, it is only one side of his behavior that is exhibited. Working with this same youth, or similar youth in community settings, special programs, and institutional settings, will enable a truer picture of the realities of the life of such youth to emerge. Therefore the bulk of the field experiences take place in non-school settings. Professional staff in such programs as drug facilities, mental health facilities, etc., can provide the type of training not available in the schools. Working with trained staff in such facilities will not only enable students to engage in cross-cultural experiences, but will enable the prospective teacher to better ascertain his/her abilities in these areas, and help him/her gain insight into positive approaches and techniques. Assignments are a highly individualized process, based on a student's academic background, past experience, interests, skills, and needed areas of experience. As a unique aspect of the student selection and assignments, both education and non-education majors (sociology, social

work, psychology, corrections) enter the program. Priority is given to placing students of differing majors (education and non-education) at the same community assignment. The interaction of such students to the same experiences, with radically differing academic background, allows for increased insights to develop for both types of participants.

Structure of Assignments

Between seminars, classes and assignments, students are involved from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. five days a week for the duration of the program. Other than classes, this is divided between part-time and full time assignments.

Full time - Students are assigned from 8:30 - 3:00 to one particular agency or program for either four weeks or eight weeks, depending on the type of assignment. Students are assigned as staff assistants and participate fully in the program of the agency. Students in four week assignments switch to new full time assignments at the four week mark.

Part time - Students, depending on the time involvement of their full time assignment (some work to 5:00 or need extra time for planning, etc.) are assigned to programs after school hours, 3:30 - 5:00. These programs are usually separate from the full time assignments and include such activities as recreation and tutoring at community centers or housing developments, or can be extensions of some full time activity. In addition, all students are assigned part time experiences in the evenings 6:00 - 10:00. These can be seperate assignments involving working

at mental health facilities, community centers, etc., or can be evening programs of their full time day assignment.

6. On-site course work - Woven into the students' activities, are classes and seminars for the two courses they sign up for to get into the program: Urban Field Experience - 6 hours. The experiences, activities and field contracts make up the bulk of this course. Weekly seminars are held during one of the 6:00 - 10:00 evening slots, allowing for student and program staff feedback. It is at this session that students can clarify their experiences, discuss shared experiences, and interact with invited community staff concerning the agencies, their roles in them and any problems or concerns that students may have. In addition the program director schedules bi-weekly individual conferences with each participant, enabling students to have direct interraction, on a personal basis with the director. Additional "community building" activities take place during the seminars.
The School and Community - 3 hrs. students meet weekly in class sessions for this course--offered on site. Discussion of their experiences and growing insights and the relationships to education and the operation of schools in multicultural urban settings are explored.

Typical student weekly schedule. Fulltime and some part time assignments will change after four weeks.

"Joan Murray"

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Full Time 8:30-3:00	Stonehedge Drug Center	→			
Part Time 3:30-5:00	Youth Service System	School & Community Class	Youth Service System	School & Community Class	Carver Community Center
Evenings 6:00-10:00	Zeller Adolescent Unit	Adult Mentally Retarded Program	Seminar	ICC Tutorial Program	ICC Tutorial Program

Student will remain in some part time assignments for the entire 8 weeks, depending on program. Students have a total of over 50 agencies and programs to choose from.

7. Program Evaluation - Ongoing development of the program is dependant on constant feedback concerning the operation of the program, as well as growth and development of the participants. Evaluative data is obtained from agency and school personnel regarding the activities of individual students, as well as program development. Program staff observation and supervision of students on-site, and student completion of written requirements, as assigned, enable staff to obtain additional evaluative data on student behavior and progress.

In addition, in order to ascertain the effect this particular type of program has on student participants in various areas indicated in the original goals of the program, various evaluative instruments have been used in a pre-test post-test format. The following instruments and resulting data have been in use most recently:

Cultural Attitude Inventory

The CAI (Skeel 1966) was devised to collect data relevant to teacher compatibility with culturally diverse populations. It is composed of 50 questions with a total maximum score of 250. Skeel states that her study supports the contention that the CAI can be useful in identifying those teacher trainees who should be able to work effectively with culturally different children.

Summary of Findings (Table 1)

A total of 107 students who were in the program from January 1977 to May 1978 were given this instrument in a pre-and post test situation. In every group, the mean scores of the students changed favorably from one testing period to the next. The average mean jump in score of the seven groups of students tested was +20.95. This indicates that students did indeed develop attitudes, etc. that were more positive toward youth of differing cultures.

Table 1

Cultural Attitude Inventory Scale

Means, numbers of students and Difference for each testing block

9 week bloc	N	Test I (mean)	Test II (mean)	Difference (mean)
3rd 1978	11	190.90	215.45	+24.55
4th 1978	16	185.33	219.06	+33.73
Summer 1978	25	197.50	208.20	+10.70
1st 1978	11	186.26	215.00	+28.74
2nd 1978	13	196.92	209.23	+12.31
3rd 1979	18	186.11	212.35	+26.24
4th 1979	18	197.92	208.33	+10.41

Personality Orientation Inventory[2]

The Personality Orientation Inventory is a research instrument which has been standardized with a high degree of reliability and validity. The POI consists of comparative value-judgment items which reflect values and behavior important in the development of self-actualized individuals who utilize talents and capabilities and are relatively free of inhibitions and emotional turmoil. A 1966 study by H. M. Dandes concludes that there was a significant relationship between measured self-actualizing and the important values and attitudes of teachers. Dandes study found that the greater the amount of self-actualizing, the greater the possession of attitudes and values which are characteristic of effective teaching.

[2]J. William Pfeiffer and Richard Heslin, Instrumentation In Human Relations Training, Iowa, University Associates, 1973, pp. 99-100.

A total of 83 students enrolled in the program from January 1979 to December 1980 were administered the POI in a pre-post test situation.

Subscales used:

SAV-Self-Actualizing Values - a high score suggests that the individual holds and lives by values of self-actualizing people, and a low score suggests the rejection of values of self-actualizing people.

Ex-Existentiality - A high score reflects flexibility in application of values. A low score indicates a tendency to hold values so rigidly as to become compulsive or dogmatic.

FR-Feeling Reactivity - A high score indicates senstitivity to one's own needs and feelings. A low score shows insensitivity to one's own needs and feelings.

S-Spontaneity - A high score indicates the ability to express feelings in spontaneous action. A low score indicates that one is fearful of expressing feelings behaviorally.

SR-Self Regard - A high score indicates the ability to like one's self because of one's strength as a person. A low score indicates low self-worth.

SA-Self-Acceptance - A high score indicates acceptance of one's self in spite of one's weaknesses or deficiencies. A low score indicates inability to accept one's weaknesses.

NC-Nature of Man, Constructive - A high score means that one sees man as essentially good. A low score means that one sees man as essentially evil or bad.

Sy-Synergy - A high score is an indication of the ability

to see opposites of life as meaningfully related. A low score means that one sees opposites of life as antagonistic.

C-Capacity for Intimate Contact - A high score measures one's ability to develop meaningful, contactful, relationships with other human beings. A low score means one has difficulty with warm interpersonal relationships.

Summary

The results of the pre and post tests on these subscales (Table 2) showed significant jumps overall in scores on the subscales. Students tended to become more self-actualizing overall, and therefore, as Dandes' study states, improved in their possession of the attitudes and values which are characteristic of effective teaching.

Table 2

Personality Orientation Inventory

Numbers and means of Gains in scores for each block tested

ock block	N	SAV	Ex	FR	S	SR	SA	NC	Sy	C
1979	18	+33	+17	+21	+19	+38	+17	+37	+32	+19
1979	18	+17	+10	+ 7	+ 9	+ 1	+28	+14	+11	+19
mer 1979	25	+18	+13	+13	+15	+14	+ 5	+16	+24	+ 9
1980	11	+16	+20	+18	+10	+23	+10	+10	+13	+25
1980	13	+28	+17	+ 9	+12	+ 5	+27	+14	+27	+19

Table 3 shows the growth in general areas determined by pairing the following POI subscales: Values (SAV and Ex), Feelings (FR and S), Self-Perception (SR and SA), Awareness Nc and Sy), and Caring (C).

Table 3

Means of Gains in Paired Subscales for all students tested

Values (Sav +Ex)	Feelings (Fe +Sa)	Self-Perception (Sr + Sa)	Awareness (Ac +Sy)	Caring
+18	+18	+15.5	+16.5	+18

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